

Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 8 remain pending in the application, with Claims 4 and 8 being independent. Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-21 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 4 and 8 have been amended herein.

The restriction requirement was made final and Claims 9, 10, 13 and 14 were withdrawn from consideration. Without conceding the propriety of the restriction requirement, these claims have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

The title and abstract have been amended as requested by the Examiner. Favorable consideration and withdrawal of the objections to the title and abstract are requested.

Claims 18-21 were objected to for a minor typographical error. Since these claims have been cancelled without prejudice, this objection is also deemed moot.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his indication that Claims 4 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants have amended each of Claims 4 and 8 into independent form, and consequently these claims are seen to be in condition for allowance.

The Office Action set forth rejections of Claims 1-3, 5-7, 11, 12 and 15-21 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-21 have all been cancelled, and the remaining claims are seen to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 4 and 8.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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